

Roaring Twenties

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The **Roaring Twenties** is a phrase used to describe the 1920s, principally in North America, but also in London, Berlin and Paris for a period of sustained economic prosperity. The phrase was meant to emphasize the period's social, artistic, and cultural dynamism. 'Normalcy' returned to politics in the wake of World War I, jazz music blossomed, the flapper redefined modern womanhood, Art Deco peaked, and finally the Wall Street Crash of 1929 served to punctuate the end of the era, as The Great Depression set in. The era was further distinguished by several long johns and realities of far-reaching importance, unprecedented industrial growth, accelerated consumer demand and aspirations, and significant changes in lifestyle and culture.

The social and cultural features known as the Roaring Twenties began in leading metropolitan centers, especially Chicago, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, Paris and London, then spread widely in the aftermath of World War I. The United States gained dominance in world finance. Thus when Germany could no longer afford war reparations to Britain, France and other Allies, the Americans came up with the Dawes Plan and Wall Street invested heavily in Germany, which repaid its reparations to nations that in turn used the dollars to pay off their war debts to Washington. By the middle of the decade, prosperity was widespread. The second half of the decade becoming known as the "Golden Twenties". In France and francophone Canada, they were also called the "*années folles*" ("Crazy Years").^[1]

The spirit of the Roaring Twenties was marked by a general feeling of discontinuity associated with modernity, a break with traditions. Everything seemed to be feasible through modern technology. New technologies, especially automobiles, moving pictures and radio proliferated 'modernity' to a large part of the population. Formal decorative frills were shed in favor of practicality in both daily life and architecture. At the same time, jazz and dancing rose in popularity, in opposition to the mood of the specter of World War I. As such, the period is also often referred to as the Jazz Age.

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Economic policies

Chart 1: GDP annual pattern and long-term trend, 1920-40, in billions of constant dollars^[3]

The 1920s was a decade of increased consumer spending and economic growth fed by supply side economic policy.^[4] The post war saw three consecutive Republican administrations in the U.S. All three took the conservative position of forging a close relationship between those in government and big business. When President Warren Harding took office in 1921, the unemployment rate was 5% with runaway inflation. Harding signed the Emergency Tariff of 1921 and the Fordney–McCumber Tariff of 1922. Harding proposed to reduce the national debt, reduce taxes, protect farming interests, and cut back on immigration. Harding did not live to see it, but most of his agenda was passed by the Congress. These policies led to the "boom" of the Coolidge years.^[5]

One of the main initiatives of both the Harding and Coolidge administrations was the rolling back of income taxes on the wealthy which had been raised during World War I. It was believed that a heavy tax burden on the rich would slow the economy, and actually reduce tax revenues. This tax cut was achieved under President Calvin Coolidge's administration. Furthermore, Coolidge consistently blocked any attempts at government intrusion into private business. Harding and Coolidge's managerial approach sustained economic growth throughout most of the decade. However, the overconfidence of these years contributed to the speculative bubble that sparked the stock market crash and the Great Depression.^{[6][7]} The government's role as an arbiter rather than an active entity continued under President Herbert Hoover. Hoover worked to get businessmen to respond to the crisis by calling them into conferences and urging them to cooperate. Hoover's vigorous attempts to get business to end the depression failed.

When the income tax was established in 1913, the highest marginal tax rate was 7 percent; it was increased to 77 percent in 1916 to help finance World War I. The top rate was reduced to as low as 25 percent in 1925. The "normalcy" of the 1920s incorporated considerably higher levels of federal spending and taxes than the Progressive era before World War I. From 1929 to 1933, under President Hoover's administration, real per capita federal expenditures increased by 88 percent.^[8]

In 1920–1921 there was an acute recession, followed by the sustained recovery throughout the 1920s. The Federal Reserve expanded credit, by setting below market interest rates and low reserve requirements that favored big banks, and the money supply actually increased by about 60% during the time following the recession. By the latter part of the decade "buying on margin" entered the American vocabulary as more and more Americans over-extended themselves to speculate on the soaring stock market and expanding credit. Very few expected the crash that began in 1929, and none suspected it would be so drastic or so prolonged.

New products and technologies

Mass production made technology affordable to the middle class.^[9] The automobile, movie, radio, and chemical industries skyrocketed during the 1920s. Of chief importance was the automobile industry. Before the war, cars were a luxury. In the 1920s, mass-produced vehicles became common throughout the U.S. and Canada. By 1927, Ford discontinued the Model T after selling 15 million of that model. Only about 300,000 vehicles were registered in 1918 in all of Canada, but by 1929, there were 1.9 million, and automobile parts were being made in parts of Ontario near Detroit, Michigan. The automobile industry's effects were widespread, contributing to such industries as highway building, motels, service stations, used car dealerships and new housing outside the range of mass transit.

Radio became the first mass broadcasting medium. Radios were expensive, but their mode of entertainment proved revolutionary. Radio advertising became the grandstand for mass marketing. Its economic importance led to the mass culture that has dominated society since. During the "golden age of radio", radio programming was as varied as TV programming today. The 1927 establishment of the Federal Radio Commission introduced a new era of regulation.

In 1925, electrical recording, one of the greatest advances in sound recording became available for commercially issued phonograph records.

Hollywood boomed, producing a new form of entertainment that shut down the old vaudeville. Watching a movie was cheap and accessible; crowds surged into new downtown movie palaces and neighborhood theatres, with even greater marvels like sound appearing at the end of the decade. Sound synchronized motion pictures, that is "talkies", were quickly replacing silent films between 1927 and 1929 (details below).

In 1927 Charles "Lucky Lindy" Lindbergh arose to instant fame with the first solo non-stop transatlantic flight (details below), and advances in aviation were to lead to commercial aviation in the next decade. Developments in television and Alexander Fleming's study of penicillin were laying the groundwork for commercial use of these important products in the 1940s.

New infrastructure

The new technologies led to an unprecedented need for new infrastructure, largely funded by the government. Road construction was crucial to the motor vehicle industry; several roads were upgraded to highways, and expressways were constructed. A class of Americans emerged with surplus money and a desire to spend more, spurring the demand for consumer goods, including the automobile.

Electrification, having slowed during the war, progressed greatly as more of the U.S. and Canada was added to the electric grid. Most industries switched from coal power to electricity. At the same time, new power plants were constructed. In America, electricity production almost quadrupled ^[*citation needed*].

Telephone lines also were being strung across the continent. Indoor plumbing and modern sewer systems were installed for the first time in many regions.

These infrastructure programs were mostly left to the local governments in both Canada and the United States. Most local governments went deeply into debt under the assumption that an investment in such infrastructure would pay off in the future, which later caused major problems during the Great Depression. ^[*citation needed*] In both Canada and the United States, the federal governments did the reverse, using the decade to pay down war debts and roll back some of the taxes that had been introduced during the war ^[*citation needed*].

Urbanization

Urbanization reached a climax in the 1920s. For the first time, more Americans and Canadians lived in cities of 2,500 or more people than in small towns or rural areas. However the nation was fascinated with its great metropolitan centers that contained about 15% of the population. New York and Chicago vied in building skyscrapers, and New York pulled ahead with the Chrysler Building and the Empire State Buildings. The finance and insurance industries doubled and tripled in size.

The basic pattern of the modern white collar job was set during the late 19th century, but it now became the norm for life in large and medium cities. Typewriters, filing cabinets and telephones brought unmarried women into clerical jobs. In Canada, one in five workers was a woman by the end

of the decade. The fastest growing cities were those in the Midwest and the Great Lakes region, including Chicago and Toronto. These cities prospered because of their vast agricultural hinterlands. Cities on the West Coast received increasing benefits from the 1914 opening of the Panama Canal.

Culture

Suffrage

Main article: Women's suffrage

On August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the last of 36 states needed to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment, granting women the right to vote. Equality at the polls marked a pivotal moment in the women's rights movement.

Lost Generation

Main article: Lost Generation

The Lost Generation were young people who came out of World War I disillusioned and cynical about the world. The term usually refers to American literary notables who lived in Paris at the time. Famous members included Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Gertrude Stein. These authors, also referred to as expatriates, wrote novels and short stories expressing their resentment towards the materialism and individualism that permeated during this era.

Social criticism

Main article: Social issues of the 1920s

As the average American in the 1920s became more enamored of wealth and everyday luxuries, some began satirizing the hypocrisy and greed they observed. Of these social critics, Sinclair Lewis was the most popular. His popular 1920 novel *Main Street* satirized the dull and ignorant lives of the residents of a Midwestern town. He followed with *Babbitt*, about a middle-aged businessman who rebels against his safe life and family, only to realize that the young generation is as hypocritical as his own. Lewis satirized religion with *Elmer Gantry*, which followed a con man who teams up with an evangelist to sell religion to a small town.

Other social critics included Sherwood Anderson, Edith Wharton and H.L. Mencken. Anderson published a collection of short stories titled *Winesburg, Ohio*, which studied the dynamics of a small town. Wharton mocked the fads of the new era through her novels, such as *Twilight Sleep* (1927). Mencken criticized narrow American tastes and culture in various essays and articles.

Art Deco

Art Deco was the style of design and architecture that marked the era. Originating in Belgium, it spread to the rest of western Europe and North America towards the mid-1920s.

In the U.S., one of the most remarkable buildings featuring this style was constructed as the tallest building of the time: the Chrysler Building. The forms of art deco were pure and geometric, even though the artists often drew inspiration from nature. In the beginning, lines were curved, though rectilinear designs would later become more and more popular.

Expressionism and Surrealism

Further information: Weimar culture

Painting in North America during the 1920s developed in a different direction than that of Europe. In Europe, the 1920s were the era of expressionism, and later surrealism. As Man Ray stated in 1920 after the publication of a unique issue of *New York Dada*: "Dada cannot live in New York".

Cinema



Felix the Cat, a popular cartoon character of the decade, exhibits his famous pace.

Time, was released. Warner ended the decade by unveiling, in 1929, the first all-color, all-talking feature film, *On with the Show*.

At the beginning of the decade, films were silent and colorless. In 1922, the first all-color feature, *Toll of the Sea*, was released. In 1926, Warner Bros. released *Don Juan*, the first feature with sound effects and music. In 1927, Warner released *The Jazz Singer*, the first sound feature to include limited talking sequences.

The public went wild for talkies, and movie studios converted to sound almost overnight.^[10] In 1928, Warner released *Lights of New York*, the first all-talking feature film. In the same year, the first sound cartoon, *Dinner*

Cartoon Shorts were popular in movie theaters during this time. The late 1920s saw the emergence of Walt Disney. Mickey Mouse made his debut in "Steamboat Willie" on November 18, 1928 at the Colony Theater in New York City. Mickey would go on to star in more than 120 cartoon shorts, not to mention starring in the Mickey Mouse Club, and other specials. This would jump start Disney and would lead to creation of other characters going into the 1930s.^[11] Oswald, a character created by Disney, before Mickey, in 1927, who was contracted by Universal for distribution purposes, starred in a series of shorts between 1927 and 1928. Disney lost the rights to the character, but in 2006, regained the rights to Oswald. He was the first Disney character to be merchandised.^[12]

The period saw the emergence of box-office draws such as: Mae Murray, Ramón Novarro, Rudolph Valentino, Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd, Warner Baxter, Clara Bow, Louise Brooks, Bebe Daniels, Billie Dove, Dorothy Mackaill, Mary Astor, Nancy Carroll, Janet Gaynor, Charles Farrell, William Haines, Conrad Nagel, John Gilbert, Greta Garbo, Dolores del Río, Norma Talmadge, Colleen Moore, Nita Naldi, John Barrymore, Norma Shearer, Joan Crawford, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Anna May Wong, and Al Jolson^[citation needed].

Harlem Renaissance

African-American literary and artistic culture developed rapidly during the 1920s under the banner of "The Harlem Renaissance". In 1921, the Black Swan Corporation opened. At its height, it issued ten recordings per month. All-African-American musicals also started in 1921. In 1923, the Harlem Renaissance Basketball Club was founded by Bob Douglas. During the later 1920s, and especially in the 1930s, the basketball team became known as the best in the world.



Climax of the new architectural style: the Chrysler Building in New York City was built after the European wave of Art Deco reached the United States.

The first issue of *Opportunity* was published. The African-American playwright, Willis Richardson, debuted his play *The Chip Woman's Fortune*, at the Frazee Theatre (also known as the Wallacks theatre).^[1] Notable African-American authors such as Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston began to achieve a level of national public recognition during the 1920s. African American culture has contributed the largest part to the rise of jazz.

Dance

Dance clubs became enormously popular in the 1920s. Their popularity peaked in the late 1920s and reached into the early 1930s. Dance music came to dominate all forms of popular music by the late 1920s. Classical pieces, operettas, folk music, etc. were all transformed into popular dance melodies in order to satiate the public craze for dancing much as the disco phenomena would later do in the late 1970s. For example, many of the songs from the 1929 Technicolor musical operetta *The Rogue Song* (starring the Metropolitan Opera star Lawrence Tibbett) were rearranged and released as dance music and became popular club hits in 1929.

Dance clubs across the U.S. sponsored dance contests, where dancers invented, tried, and competed with new moves. Professionals began to hone their skills in tap dance and other dances of the era throughout the stage circuit across the United States. With the advent of talking pictures (sound film) musicals became all the rage and film studios flooded the box office with extravagant and lavish musical films, many of which were filmed in early Technicolor. One of the most popular of these musicals, *Gold Diggers of Broadway*, became the highest grossing film of the decade. Harlem played a key role in the development of dance styles. With several entertainment venues, people from all walks of life, all races, and all classes came together. The Cotton Club featured black performers and catered to a white clientele, while the Savoy Ballroom catered to a mostly black clientele.

The most popular dances throughout the decade were the foxtrot, waltz and American tango. From the early 1920s, however, a variety of eccentric novelty dances were developed. The first of these were the Breakaway and Charleston. Both were based on African-American musical styles and beats, including the widely popular blues. The Charleston's popularity exploded after its feature in two 1922 Broadway shows. A brief Black Bottom craze, originating from the Apollo Theater, swept dance halls from 1926 to 1927, replacing the Charleston in popularity. By 1927, the Lindy Hop, a dance based on Breakaway and Charleston and integrating elements of tap, became the dominant social dance. Developed in the Savoy Ballroom, it was set to stride piano ragtime jazz. The Lindy Hop would later evolve into Swing dance. These dances, nonetheless, were never mainstreamed, and the overwhelming majority of people continued to dance the foxtrot, waltz and tango throughout the decade.

The dance craze had a large influence on music. Large numbers of recordings labeled as foxtrot, waltz and tango were produced and gave rise to a generation of performers that became famous as recording artists or radio artists. Top vocalists included Nick Lucas, Scrappy Lambert, Frank Munn, Lewis James, Chester Gaylord, Gene Austin, James Melton, Franklyn Baur, Johnny Marvin, Vaughn De Leath, and Ruth Etting. Leading dance orchestra leaders included Bob Haring, Harry Horlick, Louis Katzman, Leo Reisman, Victor Arden, Phil Ohman, George Olsen, Ted Lewis, Abe Lyman, Ben Selvin, Nat Shilkret, Fred Waring, and Paul Whiteman.

Fashion

Main article: Flapper

Immortalized in movies and magazine covers, young women's fashion of the 1920s was both a trend and a social statement, a breaking-off from the rigid Victorian way of life. These young, rebellious, middle-class women, labeled "flappers" by older generations, did away with the corset and donned

slinky knee-length dresses, which exposed their legs and arms. The hairstyle of the decade was a chin-length bob, of which there were several popular variations. Cosmetics, which until the 1920s was not typically accepted in American society because of its association with prostitution, became, for the first time, extremely popular.^[13]

The changing role of women

With the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920 that gave women the right to vote, women finally attained the political equality that they had so long been fighting for. A generational gap began to form between the "new" women of the 1920s and the previous generation. Prior to the 19th Amendment, feminists commonly thought that women could not pursue both a career and a family successfully, believing that one would inherently inhibit the development of the other. This mentality began to change in the 20s as more women began to desire not only successful careers of their own but also families.^[14] The "new" woman was less invested in social service than the Progressive generations, and in tune with the capitalistic spirit of the era, she was eager to compete and to find personal fulfilment.^[15]

The 1920s saw significant change in the lives of working women. World War I had temporarily allowed women to enter into industries such as chemical, automobile, and iron and steel manufacturing, which were once deemed inappropriate work for women.^[16] Black women, who had been historically closed out of factory jobs, began to find a place in industry during World War I by accepting lower wages and replacing the lost immigrant labor and in heavy work. Yet, like other women during World War I, their success was only temporary; most black women were also pushed out of their factory jobs after the war. In 1920, seventy-five percent of the black female labor force consisted of agricultural laborers, domestic servants, and laundry workers.^[17]

Legislation passed at the beginning of the 20th century mandated a minimum wage and forced many factories to shorten their workdays. This shifted the focus in the 1920s to job performance in order to meet demand. Factories encouraged workers to produce more quickly and efficiently with speedups and bonus systems, increasing the pressure on factory workers.^[17] Despite the strain on women in the factories, the booming economy of the 1920s meant more opportunities even for the lower classes. Many young girls from working-class backgrounds did not need to help support their families as prior generations did and were often encouraged to seek work or receive vocational training which would result in social mobility.^[18]

The achievement of suffrage led to feminists refocusing their efforts towards other goals. Groups such as the National Women's Party (NWP) continued the political fight, proposing the Equal Rights Amendment in 1923 and working to remove laws that used sex to discriminate against women.^[19] But many women shifted their focus from politics to challenge traditional definitions of womanhood.

Young women, especially, began staking claim to their own bodies and took part in a sexual liberation of their generation. Many of the ideas that fueled this change in sexual thought were already floating around New York intellectual circles prior to World War I, with the writings of Sigmund Freud, Havelock Ellis, and Ellen Key. There, thinkers noted that sex was not only central to the human experience but that women were sexual beings with human impulses and desires just like men and restraining these impulses was self-destructive. By the 1920s, these ideas had permeated the mainstream.^[20]

The 1920s saw the emergence of the co-ed, as women began attending large state colleges and universities. Women entered into the mainstream middle-class experience, but took on a gendered role within society. Women typically took classes such as home economics, "Husband and Wife", "Motherhood" and "The Family as an Economic Unit". In an increasingly conservative post-war era, it was common for a young woman to attend college with the intention of finding a suitable husband.

^[21] Fueled by ideas of sexual liberation, dating underwent major changes on college campuses. With the advent of the automobile, courtship occurred in a much more private setting. "Petting", sexual relations without intercourse, became the social norm for college students.^[22]

Despite women's increased knowledge of pleasure and sex, the decade of unfettered capitalism that was the 20s gave birth to the 'feminine mystique'. With this formulation, all women wanted to marry, all good women stayed at home with their children, cooking and cleaning, and the best women did the aforementioned and in addition, exercised their purchasing power freely and as frequently as possible in order to better their families and their homes.^[23] This left many housewives feeling frustrated and unsatisfied.

Tolerance towards other groups

In urban areas, minorities were treated with more equality than they had been accustomed to previously.^[citation needed] This was reflected in some of the films of the decade. *Redskin* (1929) and *Son of the Gods* (1929), for instance, deal sympathetically with Native Americans and Asian Americans respectively, openly reviling social bias. On the stage and in movies, black and white players appeared together for the first time.^[24]

It became possible to go to nightclubs and see whites and minorities dancing and eating together. Even popular songs poked fun at the new social acceptance of homosexuality. One of these songs had the title "Masculine Women, Feminine Men."^[25] It was released in 1926 and recorded by numerous artists of the day and included the following lyrics:^[26]

Masculine women, Feminine men

Which is the rooster, which is the hen?

It's hard to tell 'em apart today! And, say!

Sister is busy learning to shave,

Brother just loves his permanent wave,

It's hard to tell 'em apart today! Hey, hey!

Girls were girls and boys were boys when I was a tot,

Now we don't know who is who, or even what's what!

Knickers and trousers, baggy and wide,

Nobody knows who's walking inside,

Those masculine women and feminine men!^[27]



Sheet music poking fun at the masculine traits many women adopted during the 1920s.

The relative liberalism of the decade is demonstrated by the fact that the actor William Haines, regularly named in newspapers and magazines as the #1 male box-office draw, openly lived in a gay relationship with his partner, Jimmie Shields.^[28] Other popular gay actors/actresses of the decade included Alla Nazimova and Ramón Novarro.^[29]

In 1927, Mae West wrote a play about homosexuality called, *The Drag*,^{[30][31]} and alluded to the work of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs. It was a box-office success. West regarded talking about sex as a basic human rights issue, and was also an early advocate of gay rights. With the return of conservatism in the 1930s, the public grew intolerant of homosexuality, and gay actors were forced to choose between retiring or agreeing to hide their sexuality.^[citation needed]

Society

Immigration laws

The United States, and to a lesser degree Canada, became more xenophobic or, at least, anti-immigrant. The American Immigration Act of 1924 limited immigration from countries where 2% of the total U.S. population, per the 1890 census (not counting African Americans), were immigrants from that country. Thus, the massive influx of Europeans that had come to America during the first two decades of the century slowed to a trickle. Asians and citizens of India were prohibited from immigrating altogether. Alien Land Laws, such as California's Webb-Haney Act in 1913, prevented aliens ineligible for citizenship, (except Filipinos, who were subjects of U.S.) of the right to own land in California. It also limited the leasing of land by said aliens to three years. Many Japanese immigrants, or Issei, circumvented this law by transferring the title of their land to their American-born children, or Nisei, who were citizens. Similar laws were passed in 11 other states.

In Canada, the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 prevented almost all immigration from Asia. Other laws curbed immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe. A Gentlemen's Act gave America the right to prevent any Japanese immigrants from entering the country.

Popular music

The 1920s also saw the rise in popularity of various new styles of recorded music. Jazz became the most popular form of music for young people and the flapper culture. Famous jazz performers and singers from the 1920s include Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Sidney Bechet, Jelly Roll Morton, Joe "King" Oliver, James P. Johnson, Fletcher Henderson, Frankie Trumbauer, Paul Whiteman, Bix Beiderbecke, and Bing Crosby. The development of urban and city blues also began in the 1920s with performers such as Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey. In the later part of the decade, early forms of country music were pioneered by Jimmie Rodgers, The Carter Family, Uncle Dave Macon, Vernon Dalhart, Charlie Poole, and others.

Prohibition

Main article: Prohibition in the United States

In 1920, the manufacture, sale, import and export of alcohol was prohibited by the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in an attempt to alleviate various social problems; this came to be known as "Prohibition". It was enacted through the Volstead Act, supported greatly by churches and leagues such as 'The Anti Saloon League'. America's continued desire for alcohol under prohibition led to the rise of organized crime as typified by Chicago's Al Capone, smuggling and gangster associations all over the U.S. In Canada, prohibition was only imposed nationally for a short period of time, but the American liquor laws nonetheless had an important impact.

Rise of the speakeasy

Speakeasies became popular and numerous as the Prohibition years progressed and led to the rise of gangsters such as Lucky Luciano, Al Capone, Moe Dalitz, Joseph Ardizzone, and Sam Maceo. They commonly operated with connections to organized crime and liquor smuggling. While the U.S. Federal Government agents raided such establishments and arrested many of the small figures and smugglers, they rarely managed to get the big bosses; the business of running speakeasies was so lucrative that such establishments continued to flourish throughout the nation. In major cities, speakeasies could often be elaborate, offering food, live bands, and floor shows. Police were notoriously bribed by speakeasy operators to either leave them alone or at least give them advance notice of any planned raid.

Literature

Further information: 1920s#Literature

The Roaring Twenties was a period of literary creativity, and works of several notable authors appeared during the period. D. H. Lawrence's novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was a scandal at the time because of its explicit descriptions of sex.

Books that take the 1920s as their subject include:

- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald is often described as the epitome of the "Jazz Age" in American literature.
- *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque recounts the horrors of World War I and also the deep detachment from German civilian life felt by many men returning from the front.
- *This Side of Paradise* by F. Scott Fitzgerald portrays the lives and morality of post-World War I youth.
- *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway is about a group of expatriate Americans in Europe during the 1920s.

Solo flight across the Atlantic

Charles Lindbergh gained sudden great international fame as the first pilot to fly solo and non-stop across the Atlantic Ocean, flying from Roosevelt Airfield (Nassau County, Long Island), New York to Paris on May 20-May 21, 1927. He had a single-engine airplane, "The Spirit of St. Louis", which had been designed by Donald Hall and custom built by Ryan Airlines of San Diego, California. His flight took 33.5 hours. The President of France bestowed on him the French Legion of Honor and, on his arrival back in the United States, a fleet of warships and aircraft escorted him to Washington, D.C., where President Calvin Coolidge awarded him the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Sports

The Roaring Twenties was the breakout decade for sports across the modern world. Citizens from all parts of the country flocked to see the top athletes of the day compete in arenas and stadiums. Their exploits were loudly and highly praised in the new "gee whiz" style of sports journalism that was emerging; champions of this style of writing included the legendary writers Grantland Rice and Damon Runyon in the U.S. Sports literature presented a new form of heroism departing from the traditional models of masculinity.^[32]

High school and junior high schools were offered to play sports that they hadn't been able to play in the past. Several sports, such as golf, that had previously been unavailable to the middle-class finally became available. Also, a notable motor sports feat was accomplished in Roaring Twenties as driver Henry Seagrave, driving his car the Golden Arrow, reaches at the time in 1929 a record speed of 231.44 mph.

Argentina

Football (soccer) was an important aspect of mass culture in Buenos Aires during the 1920s, serving as a focus of national identity and pride. Sportswriters wrote in terms of the values and achievements of the popular classes. In their discourse nationalist rhetoric was combined with a more traditional emphasis on sportsmanship.^[33]

Olympics

Following the 1922 Latin American Games in Rio de Janeiro, IOC officials toured the region, helping countries establish national Olympic committees and prepare for future competition. In some countries, such as Brazil, sporting and political rivalries hindered progress as opposing factions battled for control of international sport. The 1924 Olympic Games in Paris and the 1928 games in Amsterdam saw greatly increased participation from Latin American athletes.^[34]

Sports journalism, modernity, and nationalism excited Egypt. Egyptians of all classes were captivated by news of the Egyptian national soccer team's performance in international competitions. Success or failure in the Olympics of 1924 and 1928 was more than a betting opportunity but became an index of Egyptian independence and a desire to be seen as modern by Europe. Egyptians also saw these competitions as a way to distinguish themselves from the traditionalism of the rest of Africa.^[35]

Balkans

The Greek government of Eleftherios Venizelos initiated a number of programs involving physical education in the public schools and raised the profile of sports competition. Other Balkan nations also became more involved in sports and participated in several precursors of the Balkan Games, competing sometimes with Western European teams. The Balkan Games, first held in Athens in 1929 as an experiment, proved a sporting and a diplomatic success. From the beginning, the games, held in Greece through 1933, sought to improve relations among Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Albania. As a political and diplomatic event, the games worked in conjunction with an annual Balkan Conference, which resolved issues between these often-feuding nations. The results were quite successful; officials from all countries routinely praised the games' athletes and organizers. During a period of persistent and systematic efforts to create rapprochement and unity in the region, this series of athletic meetings played a key role.^[36]

United States

The most popular American athlete of the twenties was baseball player Babe Ruth. His characteristic home run hitting heralded a new epoch in the history of the sport (the "Live-ball era"), and his high style of living fascinated the nation and made him one of the highest-profile figures of the decade. Fans were enthralled in 1927 when Ruth hit 60 home runs, setting a new single-season home run record that was not broken until 1961. Together with another up-and-coming star named Lou Gehrig, Ruth laid the foundation of future New York Yankees dynasties.

A former bar room brawler named Jack Dempsey won the world heavyweight boxing title and became the most celebrated pugilist of his time. College football captivated fans, with notables such as Red Grange, running back of the University of Illinois, and Knute Rockne who coached Notre Dame's football program to great success on the field and nation-wide notoriety. Grange also played a role in the development of professional football in the mid-1920s by signing on with the NFL's Chicago Bears. Bill Tilden thoroughly dominated his competition in tennis, cementing his reputation as one of the greatest tennis players of all time. And Bobby Jones popularized golf with his spectacular successes on the links; the game did not see another major star of his stature come along until Jack Nicklaus, Ruth, Dempsey, Grange, Tilden, and Jones are collectively referred to as the "Big Five" sporting icons of the Roaring Twenties.

American politics

Warren G. Harding

Warren G. Harding ran on a promise to "Return to Normalcy", a term he coined, which reflected three trends of his time: a renewed isolationism in reaction to World War I, a resurgence of nativism, and a turning away from the government activism of the reform era. Throughout his administration, Harding adopted *laissez-faire* policies. Harding's "Front Porch Campaign" during the late summer and fall of 1920 captured the imagination of the country.

It was the first campaign to be heavily covered by the press and to receive widespread newsreel coverage, and it was also the first modern campaign to use the power of Hollywood and Broadway stars who traveled to Marion for photo opportunities with Harding and his wife. Al Jolson, Lillian Russell, Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford, were among the luminaries to make the pilgrimage to central Ohio. Business icons Thomas Edison, Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone also lent their cachet to the Front Porch Campaign. From the onset of the campaign until the November election, over 600,000 people traveled to Marion to participate.

One of the most significant accomplishments of the Harding Administration was the Washington Naval Conference that set limits to military build-up around the world. His administration was plagued with scandals with which he was likely not involved (see Teapot Dome). On the scandals, he commented, "My God, this is a hell of a job!" and, "I have no trouble with my enemies, but my damn friends, they're the ones that keep me walking the floors at night." Harding's presidency was cut short by a sudden heart attack which some historians believe was caused by the stress of his scandals.

See also: United States presidential election, 1920

Calvin Coolidge

Calvin Coolidge was inaugurated as president after the death of President Harding. He was easily elected in 1924 when he ran on a basis of order and prosperity. Coolidge made use of the new medium of radio and made radio history several times while president: his inauguration was the first presidential inauguration broadcast on radio; on 12 February 1924, he became the first President of the United States to deliver a political speech on radio, and only ten days thereafter, on 22 February, he also became the first to deliver such a speech from the White House. He is famous for his quotation "The chief business of the American people is business". Coolidge continued Harding's *laissez-faire* politics. In foreign policy, he preferred isolationism but did sign the Kellogg-Briand Pact as a way to prevent future wars.

Herbert Hoover

Herbert Hoover was the final president of the 1920s, taking office in 1929. He stated in 1928, "We in America today are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land." Hoover signed the controversial Smoot-Hawley Tariff into law and was forced to deal with the consequences of the Wall Street Crash of 1929

Decline of labor unions

Main article: Trade union

Unions grew very rapidly during the war but after a series of failed major strikes in steel, meatpacking and other industries, a long decade of decline weakened most unions and membership fell even as employment grew rapidly. Radical unionism virtually collapsed, in large part because of Federal repression during World War I by means of the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918. The major unions supported the third party candidacy of Robert La Follette in 1924.

Progressivism in 1920s

Main article: Progressive Era

The politics of the 1920s was unfriendly toward the labor unions and liberal crusaders against business, so many if not historians who emphasize those themes write off the decade. Urban cosmopolitan scholars recoiled at the moralism of prohibition and the intolerance of the nativists of the KKK, and denounced the era. Richard Hofstadter, for example, in 1955 wrote that prohibition, "was a pseudo-reform, a pinched, parochial substitute for reform" that "was carried about America by the rural-evangelical virus".^[37] However as Arthur S. Link emphasized, the progressives did not simply roll over and play dead.^[38] Link's argument for continuity through the twenties stimulated a historiography that found Progressivism to be a potent force. Palmer, pointing to people like George Norris, say, "It is worth noting that progressivism, whilst temporarily losing the political initiative, remained popular in many western states and made its presence felt in Washington during both the Harding and Coolidge presidencies."^[39] Gerster and Cords argue that, "Since progressivism was a 'spirit' or an 'enthusiasm' rather than an easily definable force with common goals, it seems more accurate to argue that it produced a climate for reform which lasted well into the 1920s, if not beyond."^[40] Even the Klan has been seen in a new light, as numerous social historians reported that Klansmen were "ordinary white Protestants" primarily interested in purification of the system, which had long been a core progressive goal.^[41]

Business Progressivism

What historians have identified as "business progressivism", with its emphasis on efficiency and typified by Henry Ford and Herbert Hoover^[42] reached an apogee in the 1920s. Wik, for example, argues that Ford's "views on technology and the mechanization of rural America were generally enlightened, progressive, and often far ahead of his times."^[43]

Tindall stresses the continuing importance of the Progressive movement in the South in the 1920s involving increased democracy, efficient government, corporate regulation, social justice, and governmental public service.^{[44][45]} William Link finds political progressivism dominant in most of the South in the 1920s.^[46] Likewise it was influential in Midwest.^[47]

Historians of women and of youth emphasize the strength of the progressive impulse in the 1920s.^[48] Women consolidated their gains after the success of the suffrage movement, and moved into causes such as world peace,^[49] good government, maternal care (the Sheppard-Towner Act of 1921),^[50] and local support for education and public health.^[51] The work was not nearly as dramatic as the suffrage crusade, but women voted^[52] and operated quietly and effectively. Paul Fass, speaking of youth, says "Progressivism as an angle of vision, as an optimistic approach to social problems, was very much alive."^[53] The international influences which had sparked a great many reform ideas likewise continued into the 1920s, as American ideas of modernity began to influence Europe.^[54]

There is general agreement that the Progressive era was over by 1932, especially since a majority of the remaining progressives opposed the New Deal.^[55]

Canadian politics

Canadian politics were dominated federally by the Liberal Party of Canada under William Lyon Mackenzie King. The federal government spent most of the decade disengaged from the economy and focused on paying off the large debts amassed during the war and during the era of railway over expansion. After the booming wheat economy of the early part of the century, the prairie provinces were troubled by low wheat prices. This played an important role in the development of Canada's first highly successful third party, the Progressive Party of Canada that won the second most seats in the 1921 national election. As well with the creation of the Balfour Declaration of 1926 Canada achieved with other British former colonies autonomy; creating the British Commonwealth.

End of the Roaring Twenties

Black Tuesday

Main article: Wall Street Crash of 1929

The Dow Jones Industrial Stock Index had continued its upward move for weeks, and coupled with heightened speculative activities, it gave an illusion that the bull market of 1928 to 1929 would last forever. On October 29, 1929, also known as Black Tuesday, stock prices on Wall Street collapsed. The events in the United States added to a worldwide depression, later called the Great Depression, that put millions of people out of work across the world throughout the 1930s.

Repeal of Prohibition

The 21st Amendment, which repealed the 18th Amendment, was proposed on February 20, 1933. The choice to legalize alcohol was left up to the states, and many states quickly took this opportunity to allow alcohol.

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External links

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THE DISCOGRAPHER

1834

The E-Discographer #1 May, 2000 updated March 20, 2009

FOX MOVIE TONE RECORDS



Information provided by Vince Giordano

Victor was very strong on quality control and this included labels. There is a large file of labels affixed to blue index cards in the BMG archives and that is the source of the information which follows. [Click here to view a photocopy of a card with a corrected label.](#) Original Bluebird release information is taken from Brian Rust's Victor Master Book Vol. 2. Unfortunately the file of blue cards is not complete so missing items appear in this color. Please inform us if you have F-102 or F-108 or any others. Updated Apr. 6, 2003.

F-101

A) I'll Build a Nest (from the Fox picture "It's Great To Be Alive") (Kernell)
[from Bluebird B-5087-B mx. BS 76154-1 rec. May 18, 1933]
Bert Lown and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Ted Holt

B) My Heart's Desire (from the Fox picture "Adorable") (Marion-Whiting)
[from Bluebird B-5087-A mx. BS 76155-1 rec. May 18, 1933]
Bert Lown and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Ted Holt

F-102

A) Three Wishes (from the Fox picture "Good Companions") (Furber-Posford)
[from Bluebird B-5138-B mx. BS 76479-1 rec. June 20, 1933]
Rudy Vallee and his Connecticut Yankees vocal refrain by Rudy Vallee

B) Let Me Give My Happiness To You (Furber-Posford, from "The Good Companions"), vocal by Elmo Tanner. Per the VMB, it's mx 76848-1, recorded August 4/33 in Chicago, and issued as Bluebird B 5148, Elektradisc 2047 and Sunrise S 3229.

Odd that this Movietone label isn't listed here, in the Vallee discography or anywhere else. Hey, if Vince didn't even know this side, the label must be really obscure! - David Lennick

F-103

A) Gather Lip Rouge While You May (from the Fox picture "My Weakness") (De Sliva-Robin-Whiting)
[from Bluebird B-5146-A mx. BS 77677-1 rec. Sept. 15, 1933]
Bill Scotti and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Harold Van Emburgh

B) Be Careful (from the Fox picture "My Weakness") (De Sliva-Robin-Whiting)
[from Bluebird B-5146-B mx. BS 77678-1 rec. Sept. 15, 1933]

Bill Scotti and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Tom Law

F-104**A) Why Am I Happy (from the Fox picture "My Lips Betray") (Kernell)****[from Bluebird B-5239-A mx. BS 77080-1 rec. Chicago Oct. 25, 1933]****Ted Weems and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Weston Vaughn****B) How Do I Look (from the Fox picture "My Weakness") (De Sliva-Robin-Whiting)****[from Bluebird B-5239-A mx. BS 78608-1 rec. Nov. 3, 1933]****Barney Rapp and his New Englanders vocal refrain by male trio**

F-105**A) You're My Thrill (from the Fox picture "Jimmy and Sally") (Clare-Gorney)****[from Bluebird B-5277-A as Mike Doty and his Orch. vocal refrain by Ward Silloway****mx. BS 78527-1 rec. Nov. 9, 1933]****Joe Haymes and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Ward Silloway****B) It's the Irish in Me (from the Fox picture "Jimmy and Sally") (Clare-Gorney)****[from Bluebird B-5277-B as Mike Doty and his Orch. vocal refrain by mx. BS 78528-1****rec. Nov. 9, 1933]****Joe Haymes and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Mike Doty**

F-106**A) Eski-O-Lay Li-O Mo (I Wish I Had a Snow Man) (from the Fox picture "I Am****Suzanne") (Brown-Hollander)****[from Bluebird B-5331-A as Eliot Everett and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Dick****Robertson mx. 81026- rec. Jan 3, 1934]****George Hall and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Dick Robertson****B) St. Moritz Waltz (from the Fox picture "I Am Suzanne") (Brown-Hollander)****[from Bluebird B-5331-B as Eliot Everett and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Dick****Robertson mx. 81025- rec. Jan 3, 1934]****George Hall and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Dick Robertson****note: session heading is Dick Robertson in Brian Rust's Victor Master Book**

F-107**A) Carolina (from the Fox picture "Carolina") (Brown-Garney)****[from Bluebird B-5367-A as Mike Doty and His Orchestra vocal refrain by Dick****Robertson mx. BS 81372-1 rec. Jan 3, 1934]****B) Poppin' the Cork (from the Educational picture "Poppin' the Cork") (Brown-****Garney)****[from Bluebird B-5367-B as Mike Doty and His Orchestra vocal refrain by Dick****Robertson mx. BS 81371-1 rec. Jan 3, 1934]****George Hall and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Dick Robertson****note: session heading is Dick Robertson in Brian Rust's Victor Master Book**

F-108**A) Hold My Hand (from the Fox picture "George White's Scandals") (Henderson-****Yellen-Caesar)****[from Bluebird B-5371-A mx. BS 81397-1 rec. Feb. 15, 1934]****Teddy Black and his Orchestra vocal refrain by Edith Caldwell**

This item appeared in an auction list: B) Sweet and Simple (from the Fox picture "George White's Scandals") [from Bluebird B-5371-B mx. BS 81399-1 rec. Feb. 15,

1934]

Teddy Black and his Orchestra

F-109

A) My Dog Loves Your Dog (from the Fox picture "George White's Scandals") (Henderson-Yellen-Caesar)

[from Bluebird B-5388 as Eliot Everett And His Orchestra vocal refrain by Dick Robertson mx. BS 81721-1 rec. Feb 19, 1934]

Enoch Light and the Governor Clinton Hotel Orch. with vocal refrain

B) So Nice (from the Fox picture "George White's Scandals") (Henderson-Yellen-Caesar)

[from Bluebird B-5388 as Eliot Everett And His Orchestra vocal refrain by Dick Robertson mx. BS 81722-1 rec. Feb 19, 1934]

Enoch Light and the Governor Clinton Hotel Orch. with vocal refrain

F-110

A) You Nasty Man (from the Fox picture "George White's Scandals") (Henderson-Yellen-Caesar)

[from Bluebird B-5374-A as Totem Lodge Orchestra vocal refrain by Blanche Bow mx. BS 81724-1 rec. Feb. 19, 1934]

B) Six Women (Me and Henry the Eighth) from the Fox picture "George White's Scandals" (Henderson-Yellen-Caesar)

[from Bluebird B-5374-B as Totem Lodge Orchestra with vocal refrain (Dick Robertson) mx. BS 81723-1 rec. Feb. 19, 1934] Sam Robbins and his Hotel McAlpin Orch. with vocal refrain

note re.: F-109 and 110; session heading is Al Mitchell's name in Brian Rust's Victor Master Book

Thanks to Rodger Holtin for additional information.

During the late 1920's M-G-M had enjoyed considerable success with lobby sales of its movie discs, even though they were merely inexpensive Harmony recordings with Metro labels. Fox apparently decided to borrow the idea and contracted with RCA Victor to manufacture its discs but 1933 was a very bad time for such a venture. The public was simply not that interested in phonograph records when radio was so trendy and programs were free. The file cards held by BMG give no indication of how many were pressed but the number could not have been very large.

Seen on auction list:

F-113 FRANK LUTHER & HIS ORCHESTRA - She's Way Up Thar-Broadway's Gone Hillbilly tunes from the FOX film STAND UP AND CHEER

Ross Laird provides information on subsequent issues-

It seems that after the Victor pressings the label was produced by A.R.C. and I have three such issues which use exactly the same label design and catalog series.

First, from Mike Thomas Birmingham, England:

F-117 A ALBERT TAYLOR & HIS ORCHESTRA vocal chorus by Noel Andre - Roses In The Rain (from the Fox picture "Handy Andy") (Conselman - Whiting) mx. 15423-1

F-117 B ALBERT TAYLOR & HIS ORCHESTRA vocal chorus by Noel Andre - I'm Just That Way (from the Fox picture "The Cat's Paw") (Turk - Akst) MX. 15424-1

Both sides from Banner 33130, probably under the name artist name. Listed in Rust as ARC studio band, both sound like Freddy Martin and his Orch The vocaliste is

Noel Andre. Any idea who she was? Regards,

F-119-A

ALICE FAYE with orchestra accomp. - My future star (from Fox picture "365 Nights in Hollywood") mx. 16065-1

F-119-B

ALICE FAYE with orchestra accomp. - Yes to you (from Fox picture "365 Nights in Hollywood") mx. 16066-1

F-123-A

CLIFF EDWARDS, novelty vocal - Hunkadola (from Fox picture "Geo. White's 1935 Scandals") LA1010-B

F-123-B

ALICE FAYE, vocal with orchestra - According to the moonlight (from Fox picture "Geo. White's 1935 Scandals") mx. 16921-1

F-129-A (mx.18415) Polly-Wally-Doodle, from "The Littlest Rebel", Joe Haymes and his Orchestra, vocal chorus by Cliff Weston and The Headliners

F-129-B (mx. 18416) I Love to Ride the Horses, from "King of Burlesque", Joe Haymes and his Orchestra, vocal chorus by Cliff Weston

-Hope this helps, Gene Scranton

F-133-A

JOHNNY JOHNSON & HIS ORCHESTRA, vocal chorus by Bob Treaster - Sing baby, sing (from 20th Century-Fox picture "Sing Baby, Sing") mx. 19521-1

F-133-B

JOHNNY JOHNSON & HIS ORCHESTRA, vocal chorus by Barbara Blake - You turned the tables on me (from 20th Century-Fox picture "Sing Baby, Sing") mx. 19520-1
So it seems that there were at least 23 further issues!!!

...and Mike Thomas makes it 26!

F-136 A

MANHATTAN MELODY MASTERS vocal chorus by Al Worth - My Secret Love Affair (from 20th Century-Fox picture "Thin Ice")(Pollack - Mitchell) matrix P-21577-1

F-136 B

ROYAL RHYTHM KINGS vocal chorus by Marilyn Mitchell - Over Night (from 20th Century-Fox picture "Thin Ice")(Pollack - Mitchell) matrix P-21574-1.

I have not traced this to any "normal" issue. Any information would be most welcome.



The following is an exploratory listing of true rarities, movie exploitation discs which were not sold to the public. Label information is mimeographed indicating an extremely short pressing run, perhaps only for use by first run theaters in major cities and some may have been only for internal use at the studio. The earlier group is unnumbered and only access to TCF files may ever determine how many were made. Matrix numbers are from Recordings Inc., an independent Hollywood recording studio which had been used by Brunswick in the early 1930's. The early discs are pressed in shellac by Allied Manufacturing, the former Columbia pressing plant. About 1940 the TCF matrix series was adopted, possibly Twentieth Century Fox set up its own studio at that time. Highest number currently reported is TCF 241 (1943) so there are a lot of these obscurities to be documented. Worse yet, some matrices were cross-coupled in various combinations. Information sources are listed in brackets: [RDI] = Rigler Deutsch Index; [GM] = Moonlight Serenade: a Discography

of The Glenn Miller Civilian Band by John Flowers; [BG= Benny Goodman: Record of a Legend by D. Russell Connor] and special thanks to Dave Weiner [DW] for sharing details from his extensive research.

(B-5980)

Title: Think Twice

Picture: SALLY, IRENE & MARY

Artist: ALICE FAYE, MARJORIE WEAVER & JOAN DAVIS

(5981)

Title: Think Twice

Picture: SALLY, IRENE & MARY

Artist: PETERS SISTERS [DW]

(6646)

Title: Swing Me an Old Fashioned Song

Picture: LITTLE MISS BROADWAY

Artist: SHIRLEY TEMPLE & VOCAL ENSEMBLE [The Sportsmen][DW]

(6800)

Title: THIS IS A HAPPY LITTLE DITTY

Picture: LUCKY PENNY

Artist: Shirley Temple and Principals [rel. 1938]

[10" single-faced pressing with attractive Allied logo on reverse] [DD]

Record #4 - A Side

(B-8213) Title: Adored One

Picture: Lillian Russell

Artist: Mack Gordon & Orch.

(B-8214) Title: Adored One composed by Alfred Newman

Picture: Lillian Russell

Artist: Orchestra [RL]

(TCF 22)

Title: You Say the Sweetest Things Picture: Tin Pan Alley Artist: Alice Faye, John Payne & Jack Oakie [rel. 1940 RDI]

(TCF 23)

Title: You Say the Sweetest Things Picture: Tin Pan Alley Artist: Alice Faye, John Payne & orch. [RDI]

(TCF 25)

Title: Moonlight Bay Artist: Alice Faye & orch. [RDI] [single-faced?]

(TCF 26)

Title: The Sheik of Araby part 1

Picture: Tin Pan Alley

Artist: Alice Faye, Betty Grable & Billy Gilbert [rel. 1940 RDI]

(TCF 27)

Title: The Sheik of Araby part 2

Picture: Tin Pan Alley

Artist: Alice Faye, Betty Grable & Billy Gilbert [RDI]

(TCF 47)

Title: It's All In A Lifetime

Picture: The Great American Broadcast

Artist: ALICE FAYE
